

# **Dog Park Research**

## **October 5, 2009**

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# **I. Wydown Park Dog Park History, 1999**

**Wydown Park**  
**Dog Park History**  
**Summary**

**Respectfully Submitted by:**

**Eric Urfer, Director**  
**Department of Parks and Recreation**

**Preparation and research by:**

**Steve Brewer, Park Superintendent**

Soon after the development of Wydown Park as an open play site, it became readily evident that it was being utilized heavily for dog-related activities. The Department unofficially adopted a "wait and see" attitude toward this use. The use of Wydown Park as a dog socializing, exercise, and training area was becoming known and used.

Several residents living near the Park began to complain about the general condition as well as the developing use pattern at Wydown. As the dog owners were clearly in violation of a City Ordinance, the police were asked to patrol the site regularly and enforce the leash law.

The police took an educational approach, asking violators to leash their pets and explaining the existing ordinance.

Soon afterwards, (in the spring of 1998), a group of dog-owning residents banded together to form a group called "Clayton Citizens for a Leash Free Zone". They approached the Park and Recreation Commission and asked for their support in designating some space, preferably Wydown Park, where dogs could exercise without the restrictions of a leash.

The group studied the issue for nearly a year. (Note: several summer meetings were canceled due to the lack of a quorum coupled with the resignation of the Parks and Recreation Director, limiting the amount of discussions from July - December 1998.) In February of 1999, the Park Commission brought forth two proposals to the Board of Aldermen.

As to the first motion, with the focus on beautifying Wydown Blvd. it was recommended that Wydown Park should follow suit and compliment the project. In order to achieve this goal, the use patterns currently existing at the park must change. The staff recommended removal of the fence line paralleling and closest to Wydown Blvd., re-landscaping the site and begin to actively enforce the current Leash Law Ordinance. This motion was approved by the Board of Aldermen.

In reference to the second motion, the staff recommended the utilization of the Park Maintenance Division staff to develop and install a wrought iron fence enclosure approximately seventy (70) by one-hundred (100) feet on the site of the now abandoned playground near the north-west corner of Oak Knoll Park due west of the Rose Garden. The site was selected after applying the following criteria:

- I     **Space** - Spaces at least the size of Wydown Park were identified.
- II    **Existing Activity Within That Space** - Each area that met the first criteria was examined. Those areas that currently housed some planned activity were eliminated from the list.

- III     Relation to Infrastructure** - The remaining spaces were studied to determine how each related to basic infrastructure such as parking, pathways, and water. Those in relatively good proximity to those resources remained on the list.
- IV     Site Lines** - Finally, any identified spaces that remained were viewed from a relevant siteline perspective. Those sites located in areas that were prominently visible, were eliminated from the list.

This process resulted in one surviving site located near the Northwest corner of Oak Knoll.

This site, once proposed, met with organized opposition from residents living in the Claverach Park area. The proposal was denied by the Board of Aldermen who asked the Parks and Recreation Commission to once again examine the alternate site issue.

Shortly thereafter, another group of dog owning citizens approached the Board of Aldermen asking that a dog park be established in Clayton. They were referred to the Parks and Recreation Commission.

The group presented their request to the Commission on June 22, 1999. Their focus was on establishing set hours for dog-park like activities at Wydown Park.

The Commission will resume discussions regarding this subject at its next meeting, Monday, August 2, 1999; 7:00 p.m. at the Clayton Community Center.

## **II. Presentation: General Information**

# ***The City of Clayton Parks & Recreation Department***



## ***Building a Dog Park***



# ***Parks & Recreation***

## ***Master Plan***

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- Although the implementation of a “Dog Park” has not been indicated as a high priority for this plan, should the opportunity arise to work with a funding, maintenance and operations organization, the City should at that time consider an appropriate location for such a facility.
- 31% of respondents indicated that they had a need for off-leash dog park.

# ***Important Dog Facts***

- Over 700 Dog Parks in the US (CS Monitor)
- 8 in St. Louis, 4 Under Development
- American Pet Products Manufacturers Association Study in 2005
  - 43.5 million Americans own dogs
  - 35.9 billion dollars spent each year on pets

# ***Local Dog Parks - Open***

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Central West End

Maplewood

Florissant

Frenchtown Dog Park

Shaw Neighborhood

University City

Wentzville

Maryland Heights

# ***Local Dog Parks – in the works***

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■ Brentwood  
■ Kirkwood  
■ Shrewsbury  
■ Ballwin  
■ Chesterfield  
■ Creve Coeur  
■ Ellisville  
■ Manchester

■ Town & Country  
■ Benton Park  
■ LaSalle  
■ Lafayette Square  
■ Soulard  
■ Southwest City  
■ St. Charles County  
■ Lucas Park/Washington  
Ave Loft District

# **Main Features**

- Fence
- Secured Double Gate
- Ground Cover
- Irrigation System
- Drainage System
- Native Dog Friendly & Dog Durable Plantings
- Light
- Mobility Challenged Access
- Waste Receptacles
- Pavilion/Shade
- Benches
- Mutt Mitts & Dispensers
- Proper Signage (labeled areas, rules)
- Roofed, Incased, Bulletin Board
- Drinking Water Receptacle

# ***Benefits/Concerns***

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## ■ Benefits

- Designated location for pets & their owners
- New audience of park users
- Multi-Family Dwellings = No longer a luxury, a need
- Growth of Citizen Connection = Safer Community

## ■ Concerns

- Cleanliness from pet owners
- Funding
- Maintenance
- Location

# ***General Information***

- Dog parks can be run with the cooperation of the City and Citizen group, City only or citizen only.
- Dog parks should at least be 1 acre.
- Size of dog park would dictate membership.
- Membership can either be resident only or non-resident. Non-residents would pay a higher fee.
- A location that is selected should have limited impact on other park users and park neighbors.
- Most dog parks contain three basic formats – (1) a small/less active area, (2) a large dog area, and (3) a double gated entry.
- The range of cost is based on amenities & site selected.
- The location of a dog park needs to be easily accessible, considered common ground, and centrally located.

# ***Where in Clayton?***





### **III. Dog Park Subcommittee Timeline & Members**

**CITY OF CLAYTON  
DOG PARK  
TIME TABLE  
DEVELOPED 11/13/07**

<b>ACTION ITEM</b>	<b>PROJECT/TASK</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT</b>	<b>DUE DATE</b>	<b>% Achieved</b>	<b>PROGRESS NOTES</b>
Research	Compile research - St. Louis area dog parks	Janet Eiserle & Toni Siering	Sept - Dec	100%	summary report completed
	Visit St. Louis area dog parks	Subcommittee		100%	subcommittee members visited other dog parks on their own
	Compile research - City of Clayton existing parks	Janet Eiserle & Toni Siering		100%	summary report completed
	Parks & Recreation Master Plan analysis	Janet Eiserle & Toni Siering		100%	summary report completed
Survey to affected residents	Mail survey to Clayton residents in the surrounding area of the potential location.	Parks & Recreation Staff	January	0%	
Public Forum	Conduct open public forum for citizen feedback.	Subcommittee, Parks Dept, Consultant	January	0%	
Funding Plan	Develop detail cost analysis for dog park. Determine need for design consultant.	Subcommittee	February	10%	Researched St. Louis area dog parks' start up costs.
Present to Parks & Recreation Commission	Subcommittee presents its findings to Parks Commission.	Subcommittee	March	0%	
Present to Board of Alderman	Proposal presented to BOA for approval.	Subcommittee and/or Parks Commission	April	0%	

## Dog Park Study Group

Name	Address	Phone	Email
Hal Goldsmith	51 Aberdeen Place Clayton, MO 63105	539-2200 (work) 863-0623 (home)	halausmith@aol.com hal.goldsmith@usdoj.gov
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Jane Mendelson	110 Arundel Place Clayton, 63105	862-1555 (home)	janemendelson@sbcglobal.net
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Alex Berger	8025 Venetian Clayton, MO 63105	862-6835 (home)	berger_a@sbcglobal.net
Janet Eiserle	50 Gay Ave. Clayton, MO 63105	802-7763 (work)	jeiserle@ci.clayton.mo.us
Toni Siering	50 Gay Ave. Clayton, MO 63105	290-8506 (work)	tsiering@ci.clayton.mo.us

Interested residents that did not attend meetings:

- Ellen Cranshall
- Sally Cohen
- Steve Kirland

## **IV. City of Clayton, Department of Parks & Recreation, Park Analysis**



## Parks and Recreation System Current Park Analysis

The existing supply of park land and open space with the City of Clayton is tabulated below. Each existing park with the Clayton Park system was classified as to its park type based on standards from the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), St. Louis County and Missouri Department of Natural Resources (MoDNR). The City's current park land is approximately 5.1% of the total city land area.

### Existing Park Land Totals

Existing City Park	Size (in acres)	Classification
Clayshire Park	0.04	Pocket Park
Alamo Park	0.11	Pocket Park
DeMun Park	0.60	Playlot
Whitburn Park	0.11	Pocket Park
Taylor Park	1.00	Mini Park
Wydown Park	0.55	Mini Park
Concordia Park	1.50	Mini Park
Oak Knoll Park	14.50	Neighborhood Park
Shaw Park	65.00*	District Park

\* includes 17.4 acres for The Center of Clayton.

### Park Land Standards

Classification	Standard*	Service Area Radius
Pocket Park	.25 acre/1000 #	1/10 mile
Playlot	.30 acre/1000	¼ mile
Mini Park	.25 acre/1000	½ mile
Neighborhood Park	1.5 acre/1000	1 mile
District Park	2.5 acre/1000	3 miles

\* Standards from 1993 Clayton Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

# Standard determined by Planning Design Studio from 2007 Clayton Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

Based on the American Kennel Club's recommendation of a minimum of one acre for the ideal dog park, the following parks would fall into that category (based on size alone, factoring none of each park's current facilities or amenities):

Taylor Park  
Concordia Park  
Oak Knoll Park  
Shaw Park



## 2007 Parks and Recreation Master Plan Analysis Summary

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan was prepared to provide the City of Clayton with a valuable aid for continuing its efforts to meet and exceed the recreation needs and goals set forth by the Parks and Recreation Department, the Park Commission, the Clayton Recreation Sports and Wellness Commission (CRSWC) and the citizens of Clayton.

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan does not list a dog park in its priorities for any of the parks within the Clayton Parks and Recreation System. The following statement is made in the Plan Analysis (page 6):

*Although the implementation of a "Dog Park" has not been indicated as a high priority for this plan, should the opportunity arise to work with an independent funding, maintenance and operations organization, the City should at that time consider an appropriate location for such a facility.*

The 2007 Parks and Recreation Master Plan details the following information about the four parks which measure one acre and above.

### **Taylor Park**

- Taylor Park is popular with residents and children of the surrounding area.
- Its close proximity to downtown also makes it a frequent meeting place for business people.
- The park's northern edge near the adjacent condominiums is poorly defined.
- The current chain link fence which separates Taylor Park's other major open space from a second neighbor is in poor condition and does not provide adequate buffering.

### **Concordia Park**

- The City of Clayton has leased this passive 1.5 acre park from Concordia Seminary since 1972.
- This park is a lovely place to enjoy nature while sitting at one of the benches or picnic tables provided.
- There is lack of a long term agreement for usage of Concordia Park.
- There are significant drainage problems during heavy rains.

### **Oak Knoll Park**

- Oak Knoll Park accommodates primarily passive activities such as picnicking, dog walking and visiting the playground.
- The outstanding feature of this park is its natural beauty.
- Oak Knoll Park has a small internal parking lot.
- Oak Knoll Park current serves as a venue for certain special events and should continue in that capacity to help reduce the level of use at Shaw Park.

**Shaw Park**

- Shaw Park is the City's oldest and largest park and is home to several special events throughout the year.
- Shaw Park is slated as the trailhead and/or destination for a portion of the Centennial Greenway. The greenway will need to lead into the pathway system of the park.
- Shaw Park is heavily used and accommodates a wide variety of activities. As a result of this multi-faceted and heavy use, the park is showing signs of overuse.
- There is a lack of parking near the various activities throughout the park.



# Citizen and Community Input Summary

## **Parks and Recreation Community Survey**

As part of the master planning process, ETC Institute conducted a Parks and Recreation Community Survey to help determine parks and recreation priorities for the City. The survey was designed to obtain statistically valid results from a randomly selected sample of residents.

Residents indicated low satisfaction with the availability of the following top-three amenities/facilities (in order):

1. Walking and Biking Trails
2. Nature Trails and Nature Center
3. Off-Leash Dog Parks

## **Stakeholder Interviews**

During the master planning process, the Planning Team conducted approximately 15 stakeholder group interviews with the following groups:

Ice Rink Users	Teens
Clayton Shaw Park Swim Team	Adult Sport Captains
Tennis Clubs	High School Coaches
Parks and Recreation Administration Staff	Youth Sport Captains
Parks Maintenance Staff	Recreation Division Staff
City of Clayton Staff	Corporate Users
Clayton Chamber of Commerce	Cultural Festivals, Inc.
Clayton Water Polo and Diving Clubs	Hanley House Council

During these interviews, lack of a dog park was indicated as a negative element of the Clayton Park System. A designated park for dogs was also listed as one of the top priorities for improving the Clayton Parks and Recreation System by stakeholders.

## **Public Workshop**

Another component of the planning process involved soliciting input through Public Workshops in which each participant ranked what they felt were the three most important ideas discussed during the workshop session. The audience was grouped into teams of 4-5 people, and team leaders presented the groups findings to the larger audience.

A designated dog park was not listed in the “Most Important Idea Summary” for the public workshop.



## **V. Dog Park Research**

# Dog Park General Overview

## Acreage:

- For reference, one acre is the size of Taylor Park or approximately 90 yards of an American Football field (not including the end zones).
- Most dog parks in the St. Louis metropolitan areas are at least ½ acre. However, the largest complaint from members of dog parks that are less than one acre is lack of size.
- The American Kennel Club recommends one acre or more of land for the "ideal" dog park.
- For reference, the area that has been mentioned at Oak Knoll Park (along Big Bend Blvd.) measures approximately ¼ acre.

## Hours of Operation:

- Minimum hours of operation tend to be from 6 am – 9 pm.
- Limited hours are often due to lack of lighting.

## Membership Information & Fees:

- Membership is often driven by the size of the park and proximity to urban living.
- All dog parks in St. Louis City and County are fee-based, member-only parks.
- If non-resident memberships are available, fees are generally double that of resident rates.
- Most parks are operated by "friend organizations" with strong support from local municipalities' Parks and/or Public Works Departments.

## Amenities:

- All dog parks are fenced, with most having a separate area for large dogs and small dogs.
- A variety of fence materials are used, the most common being chain link due to cost.
- Mutt Mitts are provided and dispensed at some parks, while others simply provide a storage container for plastic grocery bags.
- All parks had some type of seating, whether it was plastic chairs (which are movable) or permanently attached benches.
- Most parks had some source of water within the park (ie: hose, human/dog water fountain, pool).
- The three most common ground covers at dog parks are grass, decomposed granite and mulch. However, it has been reported that decomposed granite and mulch may pose health problems for some dogs.

## Costs:

- Start up Costs range from \$14,300 (basic small park - Maplewood) to \$62,389 (large park with permanent amenities – Creve Coeur).
- Basic operational costs include general maintenance and Mutt Mitts (if supplied).

## Other:

- Most dog parks were assigned a specific parcel of land. Those with gradual slopes and hills (which are mostly in larger pre-existing parks) have indicated a natural drainage pattern. Those smaller parks with little or no hills did not take into consideration drainage.

## Dog Park Amenities Quick Reference Guide

	<b>University City</b>	<b>Maplewood</b>	<b>Shaw Neighborhood</b>	<b>Creve Coeur</b>	<b>Maryland Heights</b>
<b>Acreage</b>	2.5	.50	.25	2.5	1.5
<b>Seating</b>	Chairs	Chairs	Benches	Benches	Benches
<b>Water</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Play Equipment</b>	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
<b>Human Restrooms</b>	No	No	No	Yes	No
<b>Ground Cover</b>	Grass & Mulch	Grass & Mulch	Grass	Grass	Decomposed Granite
<b>Parking</b>	Limited On Street	Limited On Street	Limited On Street	Lot (1/4 mile walk)	Designated Parking Lot
<b>Mutt Mitts</b>	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
<b>Shade</b>	Trees & Shade Structure	Trees	Limited Trees	Trees	None

## **University City Dog Park**

<b>Size (acreage)</b>	2.5 acres total (separate area for large and small dogs)
<b>Hours of operation</b>	5:30 a.m. – 10 p.m.
<b>Membership</b>	456
<b>Membership Fees</b>	Resident: \$20 for first dog, \$2 for each additional dog  Non-resident: \$50 for first dog, \$25 for each additional dog  Additional Application fee = \$2 (city retains as processing fee)
<b>Amenities</b>	water spigot shade structure (in small dog area) trees lighting seating (plastic chairs) handicapped-accessible
<b>Operation of park</b>	Run by a citizens group that contracts out for cutting of grass. City maintains trees, trash and issues permits. Group handles complaints and communications.
<b>Fencing/access</b>	Chain link fence with key pad access code for members
<b>Start up cost</b>	Not available
<b>Operating cost</b>	Not available

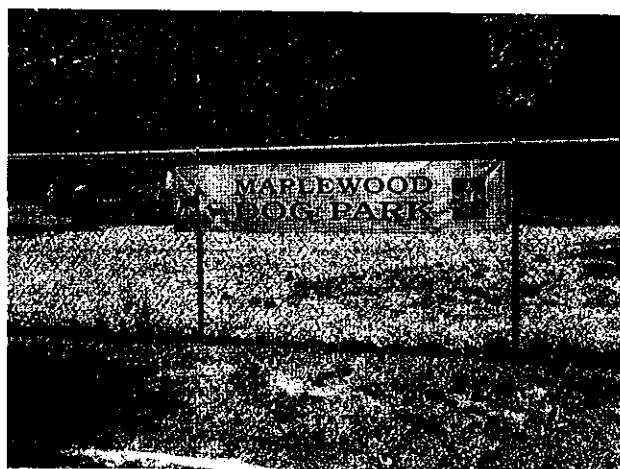
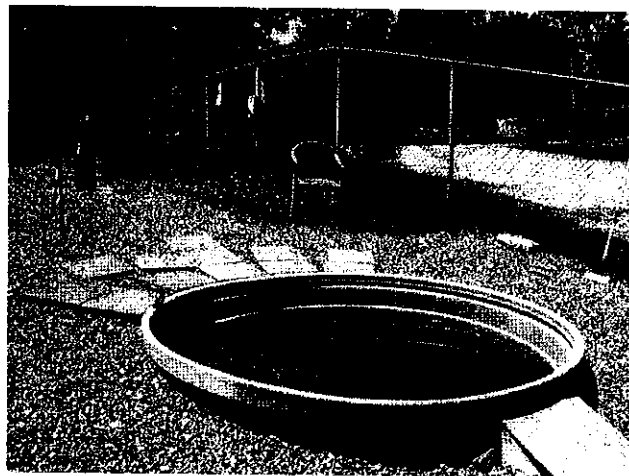
## University City Dog Park (continued)



## **Maplewood Dog Park**

<b>Size (acreage)</b>	½ acre total (separate area for large and small dogs)
<b>Hours of operation</b>	Dawn to dusk, except in winter months (until 6 p.m.)
<b>Membership</b>	250
<b>Membership Fees</b>	Residents of Maplewood, Brentwood, and Richmond Heights: \$20 for first dog, \$5 for each additional dog  Non-residents: \$50 per year for each dog (limit of two)
<b>Amenities</b>	small pool (located in large dog area) water night-time lighting mutt mitts trees seating (plastic chairs) member bulletin board
<b>Operation of park</b>	Operated with the support of the Parks Department and the City Counsel. The land is provided by city, along with maintenance of trees and trash. Tags issued by the city; rules approved by the city.
<b>Fencing/access</b>	Chain link fence with key pad access code for members
<b>Start up cost</b>	\$14,300 - \$4,140 (chain link fence), \$10,160 (water line, which had to be run for 1 ½ blocks to the park)
<b>Operating cost</b>	\$65.75/box of 500 for mutt mitts and maintenance of trash and land

## Maplewood Dog Park (continued)

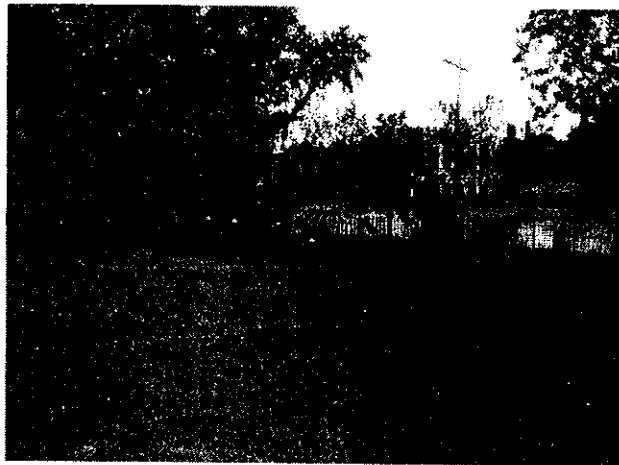


## **Shaw Neighborhood Dog Park**

<b>Size (acreage)</b>	¼ acre (10,000 square feet)
<b>Hours of operation</b>	6 a.m. – 10 p.m. daily
<b>Membership</b>	200
<b>Membership Fees</b>	Residents: \$25 for first dog, \$5 for each additional dog (up to 3 dogs)  Non-Residents - \$50 for first dog, \$10 for each additional dog (up to 3 dogs)
<b>Amenities</b>	6' wrought iron fence permanent benches trees water (except for approximately 3 months in winter)
<b>Operation of park</b>	Friends group
<b>Fencing/access</b>	12'x6' safe entry/exit area (fenced) with key pad access code for members
<b>Start up cost</b>	Not available
<b>Operating cost</b>	Not available



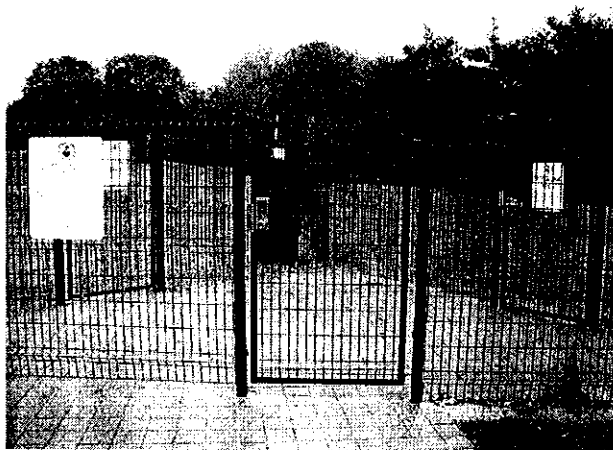
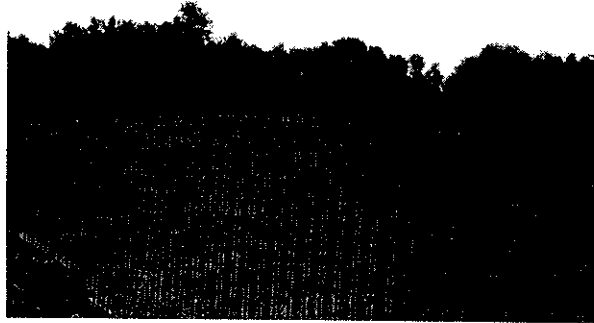
## ***Shaw Neighborhood Dog Park (continued)***



## **Creve Coeur Dog Park**

<b>Size (acreage)</b>	2.5 acres total (small dog area ½ acre, large dog area 2 acres)
<b>Hours of operation</b>	Dawn to dusk
<b>Membership</b>	310 (50 Non Resident Memberships are full)
<b>Membership Fees</b>	Residents: \$30 for first dog, \$15 for each additional dog  Non-residents: \$80 for first dog, \$25 for each additional dog
<b>Amenities</b>	dog drinking fountain permanent benches bag dispensers trees
<b>Operation of park</b>	City of Creve Coeur
<b>Fencing/access</b>	Deacero 6' gauge metal fence with key pad access code for members
<b>Drainage</b>	Park is on a gradual slope
<b>Start up cost</b>	Start up cost: \$63,000 (Dog Park was installed in an existing park, so did not have the extra costs of purchasing land, improving infrastructure, etc.) for fencing, landscaping, water line, and the amenities mentioned above. The money was from their Capital Improvement Fund.
<b>Annual Operating cost</b>	Approximately \$3,000

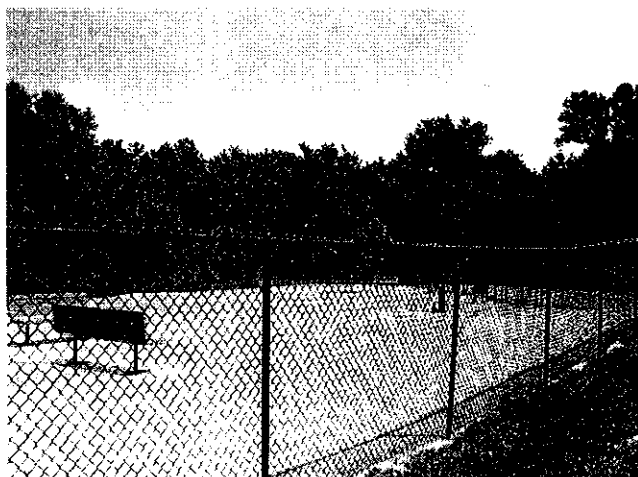
## Creve Coeur Dog Park (continued)



## **Maryland Heights Dog Port**

<b>Size (acreage)</b>	1.5 acres total (small dog area ½ acre, large dog area 1 acre)
<b>Hours of operation</b>	Sunrise to sunset
<b>Membership</b>	300+
<b>Membership Fees</b>	Residents Only: \$30 for first dog, \$15 for additional dog
<b>Amenities</b>	permanent benches human and dog water fountains
<b>Operation of park</b>	City of Maryland Heights Parks & Recreation Department
<b>Fencing/access</b>	Chain link fence with key pad access code for members
<b>Drainage</b>	Use decomposed granite, which absorbs liquid
<b>Start up cost</b>	\$48,000
<b>Operating cost</b>	cost of the mutt mitts and general maintenance

## ***Maryland Heights Dog Port (continued)***



# **Dog Park**

## **Range of Estimated Start-Up Costs**

(from 2007)

Fencing: (based on info acquired by Creve Coeur)

- Powder-coated Aluminum \$29.20/linear foot
- Deacero Fencing \$22.40/linear foot (Creve Coeur chose this type)
- Chain-link \$16.13/linear foot

Surface:

- Granite\* (measurement of load TBD) \$364/load
- K9 Grass (product, installation materials & labor) \$7.40/square foot
- K9 Grass (product, glue and seam tape) \$5.75/square foot

Benches:

- Wood \$200 - \$800
- Recycled Plastic \$400 - \$1600
- Aluminum \$300 - \$600
- Plastic coated metal \$400 - \$1000

Dog Waste Stations:

- Range from \$150 - \$375+
  - Dog Waste Bags \$60/800

\*More research is being done on what type of granite/rock is most appropriate for a dog park. Janet will send information when she receives it. The current information on the granite is based on Maryland Heights DogPort.